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Dear Xavier Colleagues,

Service and social justice are cornerstones of our institutional mission, and we continually strive to infuse the value of service to others throughout our Xavier students' undergraduate years. To assist with achieving this aim, the Office of Student Involvement has created an extensive Guide to Local Service Organizations for our Xavier community.

The guide is designed to serve as a resource for faculty, staff and students. Below, I have highlighted how individuals in various roles across campus may utilize this guide:

Faculty:

While the in-classroom academic experience undoubtedly serves as a chief enriching educational environment, there exist key learning opportunities for experiential learning activities infused in the classroom. Whether faculty and students achieve this through one-day service learning experiences or more in-depth studies, “different hands-on activities that are meant to help students connect theory with practice and present and experience theoretical concepts in practical, behavioral modes and real life settings” help further achieve our civic engagement learning goals (Colby, et. al., 2003, p. 135). Through “situating learning in their own experiences,” students can more effectively identify themselves as citizens – citizens who can critically analyze and reflect on global issues and strive to make positive actions as global community members (Baxter Magolda, 2004, p. 323). Therefore, the Guide to Local Service Organizations may help you identify specific agencies or organizations you may tap into for resources, speakers or a service-learning component of a class you are teaching.

Student Affairs Staff:

In addition to curricular learning, student affairs educators must challenge, support, and empower students to translate their classroom learning to their out-of-class experiences. Research tells us that ample leadership learning and personal growth occurs when students participate in service outside the classroom. This guide provides you with a listing of service organizations including details of how individuals can be involved. You may want to share information from the guide with students interested in positively impacting the community. In addition, as advisors to student organizations or department leaders, you may find it helpful to refer to when planning service learning experiences for student groups or department programs.

Student Organizations and Students Leaders:

There are countless student organizations on campus which are rooted in the desire to serve others for the greater good. This guide highlights organizations where students can give back, learn about the needs of community and underlying societal issues and concerns. The guide is organized by the various service/social justice issues addressed by the organizations. This may make it easier for individuals desiring to engage with a specific population (i.e. people with disabilities) to more quickly identify an organization advocating, serving or focused on the specific service priority. Research tells us that rich learning and growth occurs when students participate in service on their own and with their peers, so we encourage you to use this guide as a starting place when planning to participate in community service experiences in the Cincinnati area.

In an ever-changing complex world, it is important for all members of the Xavier family to view themselves as global community members. We need to critically examine leadership, change, and citizenship, and strive to enact our unique understanding to promote solidarity in service to community and justice. In essence, it is vital that we as a campus community challenge, support, and empower each other to consider carrying out lives of civic engagement within the educational and broader world contexts, or, in other words, become “ethical, committed, and engaged human beings and citizens” (Colby et. al., 2003, p. 4).

Thank you for your continued support and the efforts you make to foster our institution’s values and mission. I look forward to working with you as we strive to positively impact our Xavier and Cincinnati communities.

Sincerely,

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Executive Director, Office of Student Involvement

References:

- Colby, A., Ehrlich, T., Beaumont, E., Stephens, J. (2003). *Educating citizens: Preparing America’s undergraduates for lives of moral and civic responsibility*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Baxter Magolda, M. B. (2004). Learning Partnerships Model: A framework for promoting self-authorship. In M. B. Baxter Magolda & P. M. King (Eds.), *Learning partnerships: Theory and models of practice to educate for self-authorship* (pp. 37-62). Sterling, VA: Stylus.